



News Release

Medicine Bow-Routt National Forests &
Thunder Basin National Grassland
<http://fs.usda.gov/mbr>

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Illinois Pass Trail Open Between Gould and Grand County

(WALDEN, Colo.) February 25, 2011 – Grand County and Jackson County snowmobile riders can now travel a popular route across Illinois Pass between the Stillwater area on the Arapaho National Forest and the Gould area on the Routt National Forest.

Road 750 (Illinois River Road) north of Illinois Pass was closed for public safety during logging operations to remove hazard trees. That left no legal open route between Illinois Pass, Gould or Rand, until now.

"We've been trying to balance allowing the public as much safe access as possible while not putting restrictions on bark beetle contractors that would lengthen these projects or cause economic harm," explained Mike Wright, Parks District Ranger.

Logging contractors and Forest Service contract administrators now think that unusually high snowpack and the production rate on the Owl Mountain South project mean that hazard tree removal work won't happen along the upper Illinois River Road this winter.

"We can still expect two months of winter logging in the "Y" between Road 740 near Jack Creek and Road 750 near the Forest Boundary," said Kevin Bridges, Parks Ranger District Sale Administrator. "Folks will see a new barrier where the snowmobile route turns north toward Teller City and a new gate at the Forest Boundary. These should make the closure obvious and help keep winter recreationists and logging operations separated – and safe."

Access between Gould and Silver Creek via Road 780 and the route to Jack Park on Road 758 also opened as of last week. The Owl Mountain Tower Loop via Roads 790, 791 and 792 will remain open for the rest of the winter.. Bark beetle logging activities will resume in the Owl Mountain North project area after spring breakup.

Visitors should call or visit the Parks Ranger District for most current conditions. The Parks Ranger District office at 100 Main Street in Walden is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or information is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 970-723-2700, then selecting Option 5 for the Recreation and Roads Hotline.

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See Attached:

- Map of Snowmobile Routes Open and Closed as of 2/23/2011
- Photo (credit Clayton Cornwell, USFS). Caption: USFS trails and recreation workers check on the gate implementing the Road 740/750 closure near Rand. Active logging will continue in that area.

